

STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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STRATEGIC PREDICTION FOR ADAPTIVE ACTION: INFORMING THE UNITED NATIONS

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Strategic prediction is the comprehension of the strategic purpose of potential belligerents or threats in the context of political objectives and evolving circumstances, over time. This goes beyond the requirements previously fulfilled by intelligence, and includes gaming, modeling, comparative studies and a host of other techniques. If mobilized at the international strategic level of the United Nations, these techniques embodied in a Strategic Prediction Center could dramatically improve the capacity of the United Nations to develop consensus to prevent crises with adaptive, iterative action/reaction decisions. The outline of such a Center and its necessary characteristics and capabilities are discussed and recommended.

“The intelligence I receive informs just about every foreign policy decision we make. It’s easy to take it for granted, but we couldn’t do without it. . . It gives us a chance to prevent crises instead of forcing us to manage them.”

President William J. Clinton
14 July 1995

STRATEGIC PREDICTION FOR ADAPTIVE ACTION: INFORMING THE UNITED NATIONS

INTRODUCTION

From the stock market crisis of 1929 to the bombing of Pearl Harbor . . . from the urgent emergencies affecting individuals, families and neighborhoods, to confrontations and hostilities that bring the United Nations to desperate deliberations - we have ample evidence of a major truth: crises can be and have been foreseen. But - too often - nothing - or too little - is done about them, usually, until they became unmistakably, unavoidably, extremely and urgently menacing.¹

This conundrum, wherein crises can be foreseen but not always acted upon, is a common observation concerning prediction and its implication for adaptive action. Some of this arises directly from the nature of the prediction process, some of it from the issue of the ownership of the product, and some just from the nature of the organizations that have to react. This frustration from dealing with the uncertainty of a future that is not yet writ has largely thwarted acceptance of any comprehensive theory of prediction, even though such a theory is central to the entire body of work done by futurists.

Yet there are ways that can be used to improve upon the general capability to achieve more consistent strategic prediction. By understanding prediction more wholly, there could be a broad improvement in predicting what will occur next at the strategic level. Further, both to support pluralism in the predictive process and because of the need for reform and empowerment in the United Nations (UN), there is a compelling argument for the creation of an international center for strategic prediction under the UN.

This thesis of course sounds too optimistic. Prediction however, is not simple prophecy. It can be based on a host of analytical and gaming tools, as has been the case in the explosion of predictive tools at the tactical and operational levels in many advanced

armies over the last decade or more. Parallel but not equal advances have been made at some national strategic military levels, yet there is no reason to believe that this level, or the international strategic level above it, cannot benefit from the effort. This is made more important by the fact that quantum strategic change is ever more likely in the world, where knowledge, both physical and psychic, is accelerating constantly. Therefore the quest for predictive tools is entirely understandable, in fact is essential if the human race is to prepare itself for the quantum shocks of discovery to be faced in the next short timeframe.

Nothing in this thesis will solve the general limitation that being informed does not necessarily lead to action. No predictive capacity will guarantee any adaptive reaction. However, this does not lead to the deduction that prediction is therefore not useful. Informed decision is impossible without it. Additionally, there are ways in which the predictive capacity can be structured, empowered and placed organizationally so that it engenders successful action. These ways must be addressed in proposing any organization or agency for prediction.

A GENERAL THEORY OF STRATEGIC PREDICTION

Prediction at the strategic level is not commonly defined nor understood. In most cases, prediction is denied. The future is inherently impossible to define because it is not pre-ordained. It does not yet exist, so how can its existence be foretold? In this paper, prediction goes beyond the definition of capabilities that is the realm of the intelligence process. It relates directly to the understanding of the strategic context of a crisis, of the

conceptions of the threat force's leadership and the full dimensions of a threat, including economic, political, military and information. This is an amalgam between purpose, belief and physical capacity.² *Strategic prediction is the comprehension of the strategic purpose of potential belligerents or threats in the context of political objectives and evolving circumstance, over time.*

This comprehension is not a one sided view. As Clausewitz established so clearly, strategy is action-reaction, and potential threats will act differently as they perceive circumstances changing as well, to include the changing circumstance of the friendly perceptions. That is, no prediction can remain frozen in its own validity. It demands a continuous review, and the leader or commander who owns the prediction must not allow himself to become so addicted to that prediction that he cannot leave it.³

There are several unique characteristics of the strategic level that make it both the most difficult level to serve with predictive tools and also the most deserving. To begin with, while the academic and professional conception of the levels of war see these as a *continuum*, they are not. The concept of the continuum implies that the levels are equidistant from each other. This is not so. While the operational and tactical levels are inseparably conjoined, there is a greater distancing between the strategic and the operational. In fact, some operational and tactical defeat is possible without jeopardizing the strategic ends, as an example, in a war. The opposite is not true, strategic defeat is unconscionable regardless of tactical and operational success. The intellectual distance between the strategic and the other two levels is greater than the distance between the operational and the tactical. A consequence is that it is of greater importance to generate

credible prediction at the strategic level than it is at the operational or the tactical levels. Yet of course this is exactly the opposite of what is being done in the current realm of prediction. The reason is simple. It is easier to predict, to reduce to clear mechanistic modeling, the actions at the tactical and the operational levels.

Why this is so is easy to understand. War is an emotional act, and involves not cold calculated steps in a process, but the dialectic of action and reaction among men who are seeking political ends. This makes war naturally very unpredictable, that is emotive, subject to the vagaries of friction and open to the intrusion of the human spirit. This reality is more applicable at the strategic level than it is at the tactical level. Not only are the actions of smaller groups of soldiers in an all consuming environment more predictable, but those actions can be, if they are inappropriate to the higher operational or strategic needs, replaced by another set of more appropriate actions. That is, if the first platoon attack fails to seize the hill, it can be repeated by a company or a battalion until the hill is taken. So, priority must be to get the strategic decision making right, to support this level with all possible methods, so as to ensure that the efforts of operational staffs and soldiers at the tactical level are not wasted. This surely is a moral and ethical requirement as well.

There are several planes within the strategic realm, both a national strategic level and an international strategic level as well as a theater strategic level. Within the UN, there has been a revolution of improvement in the way military operations are conceived and controlled, but in truth that revolution is still in its infancy. The US and a small number of others have been behind the push to get it growing better. This recognizes that

the “crisis of government domestically is nothing compared to crisis of government as an effective organ in international life”.⁴ This certainly makes the international strategic level deserving of a predictive capability. Indeed, one might be amazed if reform was undertaken that did not include such a capability for the UN.⁵

The nature of prediction also calls up some consideration of principles that need to be recognized. The fundamental function of the exercise of prediction is not just disaster avoidance. More positively, prediction allows for adaptive action and initiative to create positive outcomes. This must be cast against the reality that individual states will define the positive outcome differently, states predictably acting as they always do, in their own perception of self-interest. Hence, any general construct for prediction needs to recognize as a first principle that prediction needs to be highly pluralistic, much as intelligence is better if its sources are pluralistic.⁶ This is made more compelling when we note that our human models of the future will only be as good as our models of the past, and that this defines the nationalistic interpretations that are put on any models or conceptions.⁷ Hence the pluralistic basis for prediction must include balance in, for example, other than US institutions or centers. Put another way, it would not be wise for the UN, as an example, to rely solely on the predictive capability of the 200 or so American institutions that are involved in it. This line of argument leads to the conclusion that plurality would be assisted with the creation of a separate, international level of prediction that works for the UN, creating as it would another element in a pluralistic prediction chain.

Strategic assessment and prediction are already undertaken by a host of agencies. For example, each year Political Risk Services maintains its seven volume series on governments throughout the world, analyzing their policy making processes and casting the three most likely regime scenarios for the next five years.⁸ Yet this type of product, while indicative of the type of fusion that is possible, is inadequate to serve the strategic level. It is dated reporting with narrow interpretation which takes little account of the concept of action-reaction.

This brings up the second principle. The utility of the predictive product is directly related to the assuredness that the leader/client has in its accuracy. That assuredness is further directly related to the leader's direct role in the formulation of the prediction. Prediction is a principal activity of the leader, and this is universal across the spectrum of crisis and conflict.⁹ The leader must own the predictive process, not just use its product. If he does so he will believe its truths and comprehend its fallacies. This directly counters the traditional view that prediction (in the narrow sense of what the enemy will do) is the role of the intelligence specialist, that prediction is a staff product that is provided to the "commander".

A third principle is that prediction must be specifically supportive of the interests and possible actions of the leader/client that it serves. That is, it must be institutionally objective and constrained. While this may seem self-evident, experience is full of examples of the contrary. Additionally there is the absolute requirement in this principle that there just not be "more" or "another level" of prediction, but that it be more selective and more effective - that is, therefore, constrained and highly focused.¹⁰ These

requirements also usually demand that the predictive body thereby be subject to a directive authority and a general body to oversee its work.

TECHNIQUES, METHODOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS

Prediction is a rising star at the tactical and operational levels of war.¹¹ In the standard group processes that are used to deal with decisions in complex situations, leaders are using predictive tools, and specifically war gaming and rehearsals, more than ever. More and more it has become clear that a commander at any level must be able to predict the future. At the tactical level this is what broad option the enemy will follow in pursuit of his operational goals. Within that option, what will he do in relation to time and space, and in relation or response to the available friendly options. In this way, at the tactical levels of divisions and corps, the future is predicted within the general time parameters related to these levels.

At the operational level the requirement for prediction is similar, but this now takes a focus on the lines of operations that the enemy will initiate or will put into play when operations are initiated against him. Operational gaming is broader, but can be fully supported by the detailed tactical gaming that can be run in parallel with the operational analysis. This has been done now in a number of operations, including for example, the preparation of NATO plans for the assisted withdrawal of UNPROFOR from the Former Yugoslavia.

The most common form of predictive work at the strategic level today is contingency planning. As a long term veteran of NATO recently noted:

Brainstorming possible political objectives and then gathering information, developing concepts, preparing possible courses of action, determining resource requirements and availability...in the end will provide a product that is seldom used. When it is needed, however, it is a gift from heaven.¹²

The evident frustration with contingency planning is that it is only infrequently used. The challenge is how to provide better guidance to the planners on what is likely to happen and in what timeframe. More effective guidance, that is better prediction, will then enhance the necessity and relevance of contingency planning and its staff demands.

Arising from the information revolution is the concept that total battlefield information dominance is the way of the future; that the classic Clausewitzian truths about friction can be dismissed with the benefits of digitization and common views of the battle space. This is just not so, and Churchill's dictum that there is "... always more error than design in human affairs" is still applicable. Understanding the intent and meaning of the enemy, so long as war decisions are to be taken by humans, can never be reduced to a series of naughts and ones. This is not a *prime facie* case against prediction, but it does tell us that if prediction at the strategic level is to be credible, it must somehow take into account the human dimension of the challenge. If there is not someone representing the human dimension, and that includes the well informed commander who has studied his opponent as one player in the wheel, then there cannot be credible results.

Gaming and rehearsals are used in strategic decision making already. In the US this is done both in the interagency process at the highest levels in government and in the Joint Staff of the Department of Defense including its support of the Commander-in-

Chief. These techniques tend to be group analysis based on role playing and specialist representation.¹³

However, this diffusion towards soft techniques at the strategic level is itself an important starting point. Prediction in the past has been largely the domain of the intelligence specialist. Its utility at the tactical and operational levels has been marked by it becoming the tool of the operator, of the generalist. In doing so, the prediction process has taken on a credibility that it lacked when predictions were the distilled result of black analysis. This does not negate the role of intelligence, indeed it confirms the vital role that intelligence must play, which is to provide the analytical estimates of ends, ways and means of actors in any strategic issue. But what intelligence cannot do is to replace the decision making process of the strategic leadership; it cannot supplant the operators, political and military, who weigh the risk in their final analyses, who combine the intelligence estimate with the results of other predictive tools, including their own gut feel, to reach a decision between options or about a course of action.

This is a key issue in prediction. Is this function simply the job of intelligence? Prediction has of course been a key or central, even pivotal role within intelligence throughout its life, but intelligence focuses more precisely on information that is then digested, or 'processed' to come to a conclusion. In the US situation at the political level, that conclusion cannot be a recommendation for a specific public or foreign policy. In the case of the CIA it survived the trauma of the Bay of Pigs and loosely controlled international activism by returning to the legitimate roots of intelligence process, the development of estimates on the path of change in countries or in relations of significance

to US vital interests for the political leadership.¹⁴ This is clearly the proper role for intelligence agencies within democracies, and can be termed in this context to be intelligence staff work at the national level. Most specifically, it is not to be an independent action arm. Therefore, the conclusion is clear, prediction is not the function of intelligence. The reverse is true. Intelligence assessment feeds the predictive process as one of several key building blocks. Such strategic intelligence assessment must be based on wide and carefully constructed models of what “normalcy” means in nations and within regions, allowing comparisons of rates of change to these normative models, so that the nature and scope of change can be confidently sensed. This means that national intelligence resources would be absolutely essential to any worldwide undertaking.

Another area for exploration is how the technologies and processes for tactical and operational prediction can be harnessed to run in parallel with strategic prediction as supporting tools. Some armed forces, and especially the US, are developing very sophisticated methods of doing this. These capabilities could be provided to support crisis prediction and decision making at the international political level if the will is there to do it.

One of the well developed techniques of prediction is modeling. This has been quite fully developed in national forecasting agencies, as is exemplified by a predictive model proposed for use when considering policy for troubled states which identifies a group of social indicators as a warning set for ethnic violence.¹⁵ Another model at another point in the continuum of conflict would be a model for how non-nuclear states

move to get a weapon of mass destruction through ambiguous means.¹⁶ This has been done. What is clear is that modeling is widely developed, is the essence behind almost all computer simulations, and already offers a wide and varied spectrum of both proven and innovative models and methodologies that can be harnessed to provide a pluralistic, plausible prediction capability .

Last are new techniques to provide better prediction in complex situations such as those where the acts of an irrational actor must be included. Is it possible to do so? Artificial intelligence, psychoanalytical profiling and enactment, virtual reality and futurism all offer possible benefits, if understood and if integrated with existing gaming systems. With the further development of chaos theories, it is possible to run chaos driven representations of even the irrational, for no leader on the world stage starts with a completely empty set of values, beliefs, knowledge, not even the terrorist. The computing power available today makes such modeling and enactment technically routine.

parapsychological applications
backcasting, queuing and feedback
cross impact matrices
Delphi surveys
scenario building, modeling and gaming
trend analysis and comparative studies to normative states
enactment, rehearsal, role playing scenario realization

Figure 1 - Techniques and Methodologies to Support Prediction

A range of predictive tools are at Figure 1.¹⁷ These serve to illustrate that the possibilities are quite broad when it comes to the prediction toolchest. While this

discussion has not been in any detail, it firmly supports the argument that there is indeed a vast body of techniques, models and other methodologies that can be harvested by an international prediction center. The bases of this capability are the standard intellectual and scholarly talents of thinkers with imagination, supported by good information and intelligence which includes a full set of normative scenarios and baselines by which to recognize and measure change.¹⁸ It is not a new voyage.

ROLES , OBJECTIVES AND A MODEL

Having discussed the general nature of prediction and having established why it is most important to provide prediction at the international strategic level, the specific case of the UN can be addressed. This organization needs improvement.

Prediction is desirable because it allows advanced warning so that preventative action, or more effective reaction, by the UN can be contemplated. The role of prediction therefore is to provide leaders with probable and plausible predictions of crises before they become immediately menacing and while there is still time to take either preventative or containing action. That is, prediction must inform UN action. In the context of the six requirements needed for effective UN rapid reaction, prediction directly supports the first two, which are an early warning mechanism and support to effective decision making.¹⁹

This requirement has been identified and stated and restated by the UN itself. In analyzing “ways of strengthening and making more efficient. . . preventive diplomacy ” the aim was clearly established: “To seek to identify at the earliest possible stage

situations that could produce conflict, and to try through diplomacy to remove the sources of danger before violence results. . . ”. The Secretary General further saw the need to “strengthen arrangements in such a manner that information . . . can be synthesized with political indicators to assess whether a threat to peace exists and to analyze what actions might be taken by the United Nations. . . ”.²⁰

A key initial requirement for prediction is simply to draw attention to the upcoming crisis in a world where there are too many crises, too much of the time, each crying out for some relief or resolution. In essence, no single state and no international agency can muster the will or the resources to deal discretely with every single crisis, and not all crises demand international response. Many are short term, many will not spill over into international or regional streams, and many are unsolvable. So an initial expectation is that prediction can focus attention on those potential crises that will, in their scope and their locality, demand the attention of regional or international players. The requirement for this tier is that it would allow the beginning of mobilization of political will in the international and national realms to deal with the crisis if it arrives. And more importantly it would allow the taking of preventive action early. While in a slow moving era this capability might be a luxury, in a time of rapid crises occurrence it can be deemed a structural necessity for the international community.²¹

In a second tier of prediction, the seers must reveal what is likely to precipitate the crisis, what the indicators are going to be, and what the actions of the major players will be. This predictive tier allows the commencement of denial strategies aimed at preventing the actualization of the crisis, permitting the design of moves to shape the

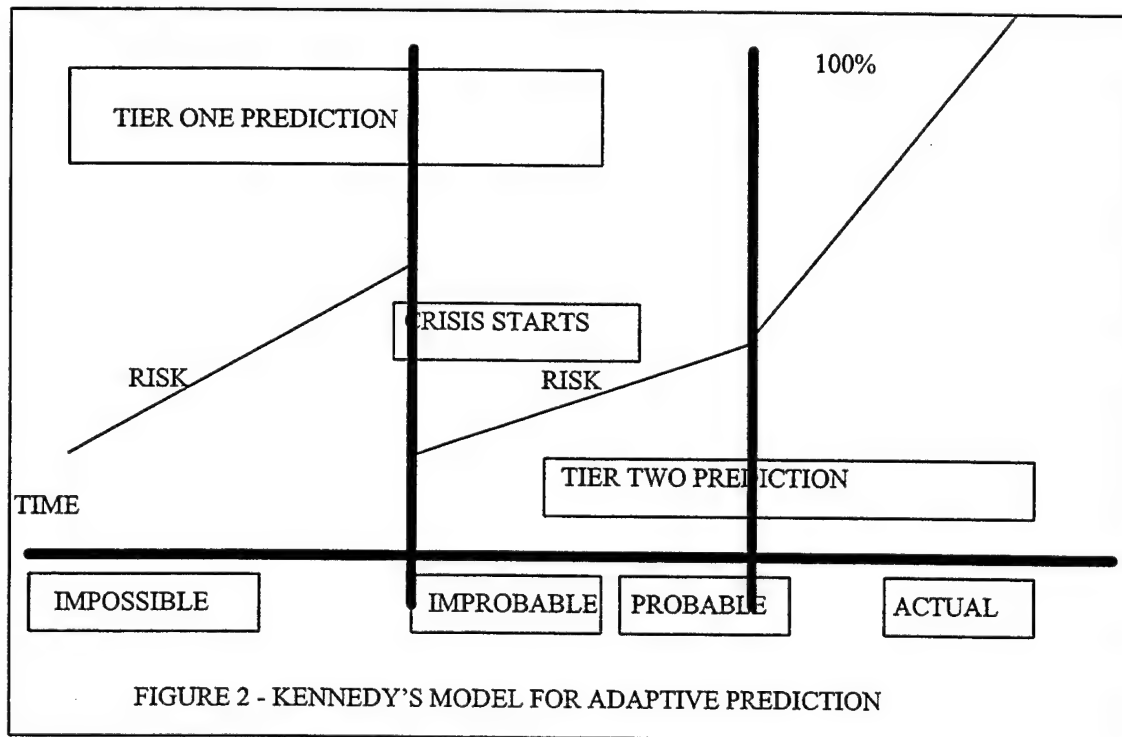
actions of players and allowing for the mobilization of resources to mitigate the results of the crisis. This can be anything from the preparation of forces for the reaction to a major storm or the preparation of military forces for a Chapter 7 intervention.

The results of such action, or more commonly the results of not preventing crisis, are clear. Humanitarian disasters, for example, impact in two ways: first, the investments made in development programs and advances over years before a disaster can be wiped away in a brief cataclysm; second, the capital invested in the response to a crisis is not available for long term development in other areas - there is a fixed limit to the resources available.

The critical lesson from some recent analyses of crisis inaction as in Rwanda, is “. . . that modest but timely measures can make the difference between a situation which is stable or contained and a humanitarian disaster which has spiraled out of control.”²² The absolute requirement for prediction is to allow sufficient warning and clarity about the results of inaction so as to permit the timely mobilization of political will both in international and national centers.

At the strategic level there are the dual branches of prediction before a crisis and prediction as to the actions of the belligerents and third parties once a crisis has started. These two may require somewhat different techniques, but generally the major differences are those of time and definition. The prediction is useless if it does not result in some adaptive action, and the scope of that adaptation may generally be determined as a result of the speed it must be arrived at, and the size of the action (velocity X mass). Further, the scale of such activity must take into account the full range of threat, from

impossible through improbable to probable, and on to actual. This results in the relationship at Figure 2, which identifies the hypothetical line “risk”, the vector of which must be changed by the adoption of policy so as to invert its direction, retard it in time or probability, or reverse it. This then is a simple model of adaptive prediction at the strategic level.



This model allows us therefore to contemplate a general supporting model for a predictive agency to support the international effort to deal with the international challenges of the future, which is titled, for discussion purposes, the UN Strategic Prediction Center (UNSPC).

This is not to say that the UN does not currently have some predictive capability. It does. Specific capabilities include those analytical agencies in some of the UN

Departments and specialized agencies, and especially the five Regional Commissions and the planning elements of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.²³ It also has sources of information, the primary one of which is the information and intelligence provided by the national member states. The other six sources of information for the UN would be the separate UN offices worldwide, on-site missions, regional bodies such as the Organization of American States, non-governmental agencies, and direct information from sensor systems, such as satellites, that might be made available from member states who deploy such collection assets or from a new UN capability for such from within its own resources.²⁴

The Predictive Model recognizes that there are two tiers of prediction. Tier 1 is pre-emptive strategic, and aims at harnessing the vast array of current predictive tools and centers in the world through a common data base and communications architecture into a cohesive if busy whole. The Tier 1 capability would be a center of excellence but would largely be an integrative group that harnesses existing national and regional resources, putting these into the context of a plausible set of longer term predictions, something on the order of one to five years out. Its basic grist would be normative models and analytical research, some of which it would direct, but much of which it would cull from the huge open source material database that exists already.²⁵ The product of Tier 1 would be World Advisories, a series of distilled predictive analyses in two basic categories, Immediate and Watch. The Tier 1 process would need to be co-located in its central organs with the Tier 2 capability.

The Tier 2 capability would be re-active strategic. It would rely on largely on-site predictive tools to chart the expected commencement and flow of a crisis so as to identify the requirement for and forms of international, multi- or bi-national assistance that should be brought to bear on a crisis. The Tier 2 capability would also be a center of excellence institution that harnesses both conventional and cutting edge techniques to provide credible prediction that can be used to mobilize international effort to react effectively to identified triggers.

Both of the tier capabilities need to be directly supported with an Intelligence Division. The strategic intelligence problem that this Division deals with is "what are the military, economic, diplomatic and informational resources that a threat can bring to bear to influence, subvert or defeat the collective action of the UN?" While the UN has never been directly involved in intelligence production itself, it has recently been able to receive intelligence from national sources, such as the US, after a specific request has been made and has received national approval and release authorization.²⁶ As well, the problem of some limited member states knowing much more about a threat than the UN, and not sharing that knowledge, has long been recognized as a serious dichotomy.²⁷ This proposed Division would improve on the very limited current UN capability, establishing a wide network of intelligence links where appropriate data and intelligence products could be shared with supportive national or alliance systems. This recognizes that intelligence is not a 'free' commodity, as well as the second great truth, that information is not self-interpreting.²⁸

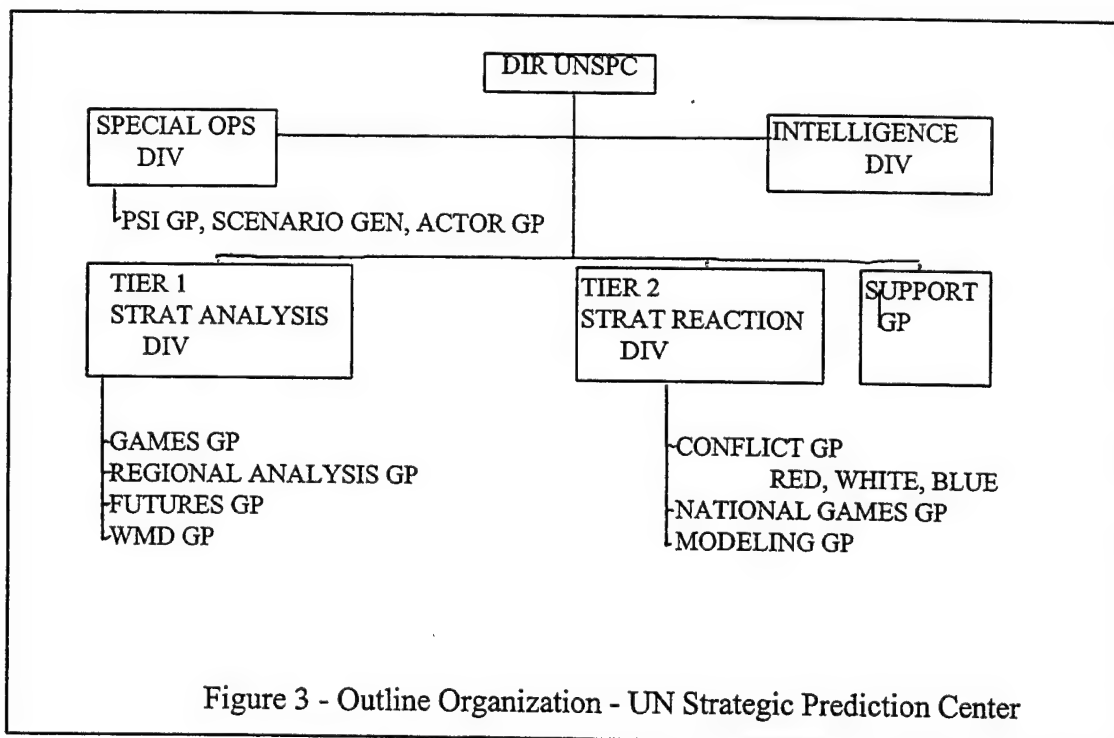
The UNSPC would have the ability to mobilize or do itself the scholarly research and analysis to tap the "non-secret" open sources, although most of this work is already available in the information market place and only needs to be harvested. These backbone techniques of course do not produce much on closed societies or less developed areas that are not well permeated by media.²⁹ Hence, intelligence derived from human and technical sources still is necessary to provide balance in the intelligence products within the UNSPC. But clearly these sources or productive capacity do not need to be owned by the UN, nor does the UN need other capabilities such as counterintelligence for its purposes.

Intelligence at this level is by definition limited to the broad interest area of the UN as an international political body. Its character, specificity and sourcing can all be dealt with through a consensual arrangement with capable member states. In many areas of strategic intelligence, there is limited world coverage, and most of that is currently in the hands of one power. Importantly though, there cannot be reliance on a single source, for American intelligence agencies have shown "... a scarcely unique incapacity to escape from one's own strategic assumptions".³⁰ This is a simple case again for the need for pluralistic intelligence, both in terms of sourcing and of interpretation. Only a separate Agency can hope to provide "objective and disinterested assessments" over the long run.³¹

Thus, a necessary precondition to the success of the UNSPC is a set of negotiated bilateral relationships with national intelligence and prediction centers. This must go beyond the current intelligence support from the US, which is itself a recent

development.³² There is an excellent role here for the US - to go beyond its concern over the UN's ability to handle information it receives - and to make this precondition attainable. The UNSPC would also need to be able to request competitive analysis and prediction from supporting national or commercial centers to provide depth to its capabilities in the economic, social, environmental, scientific and military areas of intelligence.

To deepen the capacity of the UNSPC a special operations division would harness the Center's ability to exploit leading edge, innovative and controversial methods. This could include parapsychological resourcing especially in relation to determining or portraying individual or social actions, bringing in actors to play out in full characterization-based scenarios the path of rogue leaders, and a central scenario generation group.³³



The divisions would not be built on a traditional hierarchical structure, but should be a flat structure of small (3-5 person) quality teams and a few larger (7-9 person) production groups. Using this approach, limited competitive analysis and prediction is possible in-house, there will be ease in reshaping human resources and the Center would unlikely grow bureaucratically.

The support group for the UNSPC is the automation and communication backbone to ensure that the divisions have full connectivity to the global nets that will allow them to harvest the information and net with the data bases that are available. This group is small, but needs to interact with a large number of worldwide and national providers.

Together the two tier divisions, the intelligence division and the special operations division would form a single UNSPC, an operating agency of the UN, on the outlines of Figure 3. This SPC would work directly for the UN Secretary General and Security Council. Some of its products would normally be provided to the General Assembly as well. The Tier 2 element of the SPC would also have a direct relationship with the Military Advisor and the UN situation room.

It can be argued that there are other, more pressing needs for the UN, such as reform of the Security Council and that there is no point in having an effective prediction capability serving an over-politicized decision body. But this is a red herring at best, for that Council in any form cannot hope to be effective without independent sources of information, without triggers for action. As well, although some would argue that some nations would not agree to yet another UN agency, certainly the US recognizes that there

are areas in the UN that are grossly under resourced even while there may be inefficiencies and overstaffing in others.³⁴

While the UNSPC is easy to sketch in a box, it would need a charter and a set of operating procedures all considered and, arguably, agreed by a majority of the member states.³⁵ Most importantly, it would need the explicit support of the Security Council. Even more pointedly, it is the Permanent Five (P5), who dominate the political agenda of the Council, who would have to give at least nods of acquiescence. Further, experience would indicate that such an Agency would also require supervisory or oversight review through a committee of the General Assembly. This committee would likely have representation from some Security Council nations, including the P5, and from the many nations providing inputs on a bilateral basis. Its role would not only be general oversight. It would also deal with issues of security and priorities as necessary. It would not deal with the product of the Agency *per se*.

While the apparent simplicity of the proposed organization is a virtue, its strength should be based on a systems approach to the predictive challenge. This "seeks to bring to fruition a complex result in which the interaction between major elements have been worked out", and where analysis is "pervasive".³⁶ How it would harness, connect, relate and fuse the myriad of internal and national capacities with its own would require effective design and engineering.

The creation of the UNSPC is something that could be accomplished with relative ease, with the exception perhaps of the intelligence piece, through the fiat of the Security Council which has the authority to create such agencies as it deems fit. To take that

route, however, would be to deny any chance of success. Such an agency must be established with full public debate, for it is only in broad consensus that such an agency would have the legitimacy to be heard and believed, and empowered politically within the broad context of a multiplicity of UN agencies, offices and operating conditions.³⁷ It would also logically subsume some of the current predictive capabilities that exist in some of the layers in the UN, and therefore would need maximum legitimacy at the beginning.

Further, the UNSPC would need all of the bureaucratic standing that it could be given.³⁸ UN agencies that do not have such standing are less than effective. This is why the UNSPC must be created as an Agency working directly for the Secretary General and for the Security Council. This in itself would provide it with bureaucratic power. At the same time the UNSPC would also adhere to a separation of prediction from policy, much as the 'golden rule' in the intelligence community generally keeps intelligence and policy separated.³⁹ The product of the UNSPC is warning and predictive policy options, not a recommendation on a single course of action.

The last empowering notion is that of leadership. Such a center would have to be led by a highly motivated, independent and robust leader who is ready to wrestle the Agency into effectiveness. Forceful leadership is the best insulator from the supine corruption of such an Agency to the strategic assumptions or miscalculations of its detractors or the member states of its parent body. As well as leadership, the leader of such a capability would also have to possess excellent macromanagement skills, another area that needs constant attention in the UN.⁴⁰ These same qualities are needed for the

Division, group and team leaders as well. Persons imbued with initiative, imagination and besotted with the "sheer virtue of clarity"⁴¹ are the leaders needed in a UNSPC that could energize the reformation process within the UN.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Much pessimism pervades any discussion of the advice/prediction - policy/action divide. There are many examples of predictive and adaptive failure, and many an observer to note that, despite a huge investment in organized research and expert advisory institutions, politics and policies remain no more rational or "certain of success".⁴² Yet this does not prove the opposite either, that rationality or success can be had by *not* organizing and advising. A fundamental conclusion is that there can be little informed statecraft at the international level if a predictive capability does not exist there. Two US Presidents and a multitude of others have recognized this.

There is a large body of literature on futures, prediction and simple prophecy. There are literally thousands of agencies that comprise think tanks, futures centers and intelligence bodies that provide analysis and policy advice. However, the method by which strategic leaders can approach the issue at their level in a useful and common way has not been well developed. Prediction can save resources, can bolster the ephemeral nature of deterrence, can prevent crises and can save the lives of soldiers. How assured would leaders have to be about the benefits before they might be willing to make the investment in integrating the approaches to the process of strategic prediction? If one single armed conflict might be prevented, would that justify the attempt?

There are clear and compelling arguments that the UN needs, as a first step towards true reform, to be empowered with a capability to predict what may happen next. This is more than, even while it is different than, an intelligence or a simple information capability for the UN. A general concept of prediction goes beyond these capabilities at the strategic level. It involves harnessing the full spectrum of predictive tools that are available in the automated age, and recognizing that Clausewitz's action-reaction dictum is very pervasive at the strategic level.

The major players in the UN should look towards the development of a single, two tiered predictive center of excellence for the United Nations. This Center would be the lead integrator for the Security Council of national predictions, and would provide its own fusion of techniques for the Military Advisor and the Secretary General. It might save more than one war, more than one life.

ENDNOTES:

¹ William Exton, Jr., "The Future of Crisis Control and Conflict Resolution" in Challenges and Opportunities From Now to 2001, ed. Howard F. Didsbury, Jr. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 13.

² This is taken from a discussion of William James's "insane logic" that would ignore that relationship. See Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War, (London: The Free Press, 1990), 121, 123.

³ Ibid., 123, 126.

⁴ Peter F. Drucker, The Age of Discontinuity: Guidelines to Our Changing Society. (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 222.

⁵ In the US push for reform, this did include the requirement for the UN to get "access to timely intelligence" in the words of President Clinton. The argument here is that this, and the other calls in PDD - 25 are inadequate to really meet the needs for strategic prediction. See Victoria K. Holt, Briefing Book on Peacekeeping: The U.S. Role in United Nations Peace Operations, (Washington: Council for a Livable World Education Fund, 1995), 18-19. As well, Congress has erected statutory hurdles. The Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1996 and 1997, specifies that "No United States intelligence information may be provided to the United Nations, or any organization affiliated with the United Nations. . . unless the President certifies to the Committee. . . that. . . such organization has established and implemented, procedures for protecting intelligence sources and methods. . . no less stringent than procedures maintained by nations with which the United States regularly shares similar types of intelligence information." Cited in The Judge Advocate General's 1996 Continuing Legal Education Program - Electives, "Peace Operations", IV, H, 3, fn.

⁶ This is deduced from discussion of intelligence and prophecy, in Cohen and Gooch, 115-118.

⁷ Gary S. Schofield, "Avoiding the Future of War" in Future Vision: Ideas, Insights, And Strategies, ed. Howard F. Didsbury, Jr., (Bethesda, MD: World Future Society, 1996), 299.

⁸ William D. Coplin and Michael K. O'Leary, eds., Political Risks Yearbook: 1995, (East Syracuse: Political Risk Services, 1995)

⁹ Indeed a common frustration in this area is that leaders often tend to act as their own analysts, especially if their decisions on that basis support their policy preferences. This is arguably unwise, as many leaders are politicians or diplomats by professional training and experience, *not* analysts, and most would not have the time nor perhaps the discipline to do full inquiry. Finally, there is the leaders' tendency to like YES/NO solutions or recommendations, as opposed to probabilities or dependent probabilities. Ephraim Kam, "Intelligence and Decision Makers," in Strategic Intelligence: Theory and Application, eds. Douglas H. Dearth and Royal Thomas Goodden (Carlisle Barracks: USAWC, 1995), 140 and Richard Brody, "The Limits of Warning," in Dearth and Goodden, 286.

¹⁰ This is partly interpreted from the general US goal for "more selective and more effective" UN operations. Ivo H. Daalder, "Knowing When To Say No: The Development of US Policy for Peacekeeping," in UN Peacekeeping, American Politics, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s, ed. William J. Durch (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 58.

¹¹ This is a conclusion that I reached after serving as the COS 1st Canadian Division Headquarters for 31/2 years ending in the summer of 1996. There I worked at both the tactical and the operational levels, through a variety of missions and for a variety of commanders. My experience included the development of gaming within the decision cycle for the HQ, where it was introduced at three points into the process and came to dominate that process. As this staff tool became more important, it drew the attention of the Commander, who had to become more involved in the process itself since the gaming was more and more contributing deductive analysis to his staff's eventual recommendations. In the end the Commander must own the key deductive, analytical elements of his decision process if he is going to base his conceptualization of the battle or campaign on their results.

¹² Jack Dangerfield, "Military Staff in an International Organization", in UN Rapid Reaction Capabilities: Requirements and Prospects, eds. David Cox and Albert Legault, (Clementsport, NS: The Canadian Peacekeeping Press, 1995), 77.

¹³ From a lecture, Colonel Stanley Gorenc, Chief, Studies, Analysis and Gaming Division, "The Joint Staff, J8", US Army War College, October, 1996.

- ¹⁴ Rhoderi Jeffreys-Jones, The CIA & American Democracy, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 134 for the detail of one renaissance within the CIA. However, the full story of the CIA both here and in a host of other accounts, supports this conclusion.
- ¹⁵ Pauline H. Baker and John A. Ausink, "State Collapse and Ethnic Violence: Towards a Predictive Model" in Parameters, 17, (Spring, 1996), 19-31.
- ¹⁶ B. R. Schneider, "Principles of War for the Battlefield of the Future", in Battlefields of the Future: 21st Century Warfare Issues, eds., Barry R. Schneider and Lawrence E. Grinter, (Air War College: Air University Press, 1995), 27.
- ¹⁷ Partly borrowed from Richard A. Slaughter, "How to Develop a Social Foresight Capacity" in Didsbury, (1996), 94 and Guy Black, The Application of Systems Analysis to Government Operations. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 26-33.
- ¹⁸ Slaughter, 96, 99.
- ¹⁹ Government of Canada, Towards a Rapid Reaction Capability for the United Nations, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1995), 21-22.
- ²⁰ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping, (New York: United Nations, 1992), 1, 7-8. The need is widely acknowledged, and was in the General Assembly Resolution on reform, cited in Brian Urquhart and Erskine Childers, Towards a More Effective United Nations, (Uppsala, Sweden: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 1992), 89.
- ²¹ Slaughter in Didsbury, (1996), 88. Here Slaughter makes the case for such a capability in the internal national case, but I believe that the argument is equally valid in the world security context.
- ²² Government of Canada, 5.
- ²³ These are discussed in generalities, although there is rarely a claim that these are adequate. See Boutros-Ghali, 16 and Urquhart and Childers, 26-27.
- ²⁴ A. Walter Dorn, "Keeping Tabs on a Troubled World," in Security Dialogue 27(3), 1996: 268. The opportunity to get better advantage out of the regional organizations of the UN, which in some ways are the "eyes and ears" of the Secretary General and the Security Council is argued in Michael Harbottle, "Security and International Conflict Control in the 1990s: UN Peacekeeping in Proper Perspective," in The Brown Journal of World Affairs, 3(1), (Winter/Spring 1996), 121.
- ²⁵ Despite the mountain of open source analysis and research, there are still some areas where there is insufficient material. See as an example David Carment and Patrick James, "Two Level Games and Third Party Intervention: Evidence from Ethnic Conflict in the Balkans and South Asia," in Canadian Journal of Political Science 29(3), (Sep, 96), 521.
- ²⁶ This was from a lecture, Capt John B. Seiden, "J2 Organization for the CJCS", US Army War College, 11 Dec 96.
- ²⁷ U. S. Congress, Reform of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: A Mandate for Change, (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1993), 40 and Hugh Smith, ed., Peacekeeping: Challenges for the Future, (Canberra: Australian Defence Studies Centre, 1993), 9 are two examples of the recognition of the problems.
- ²⁸ Glenn P. Hastedt, ed., Controlling Intelligence. (Portland: Frank Cass, 1991), 11-12.
- ²⁹ Jeffrey Richelson, The U.S. Intelligence Community. Second Ed. (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1989), 251-252 and John m. Oseth, Regulating U.S. Intelligence Operations: A Study in Defining the National Interest (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1985), 16.
- ³⁰ Jeffreys-Jones, 248.
- ³¹ Cord Meyer, Facing Reality: From World Federation to the CIA. (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 348.
- ³² Daalder, 37 has a recapitulation of the words of both President Bush and President Clinton and their promise of intelligence support for the UN. There are also the judgments of the very positive results that have accrued to the US through its established bilateral intelligence activities in Harold P. Ford, Estimative Intelligence: The Purposes and Problems of National Intelligence Estimating, Second Ed. (New York: University Press of America, 1993), 195, 201. There are also clear calls for more multilateral sharing in Report of the Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the United States Intelligence Community, Preparing for the 21st Century: An Appraisal of U.S. Intelligence, US Government Printing Office, 1 March, 1996, 127, 130.

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- ³³ While some of this may be criticized as fanciful, the requirement can be fundamental - for what makes sense to YOU AND ME may not be a determining factor of what THEY OR HE will do. See Ford, 23.
- ³⁴ William Durch, "Keeping the Peace: Politics and Lessons of the 1990's", in Durch, 11.
- ³⁵ Some of this is deductive from the discussion of these topics by Richelson, 365-366, 448.
- ³⁶ Black, 4.
- ³⁷ Jeffreys-Jones, 25, 249. This is a parallel from arguments over the establishment and sustainment of the CIA as presented by Jeffreys-Jones.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 250.
- ³⁹ Hastedt, 10, explores this 'rule' as well as Jeffreys-Jones, 249.
- ⁴⁰ James S. Sutterlin, The United Nations and the Maintenance of International Security: A Challenge to be Met, (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), 126-127, and Durch in Durch, 11 who notes that "Management remains the UN's weak suit".
- ⁴¹ Ford, 20.
- ⁴² James Allen Smith, The Idea Brokers: Think Tanks and the Rise of the New Policy Elite (New York: The Free Press, 1993), xii; Ford, 319-322.

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